

## **New Brunswick Youth Accord on Biodiversity is released**

**Fredericton, New Brunswick, October 14, 2010** – The NB Youth Biodiversity Accord has received 8 endorsements from provincial youth groups and 7 citizen based groups from around the province. The New Brunswick Youth Accord on Biodiversity is a collective youth statement directed at the leaders of our province and the general public and is a call to action on biodiversity

According to the youth accord “The youth of New Brunswick are extremely concerned about current issues threatening biodiversity in our province. We strongly believe that immediate action is necessary.” “The youth accord is a message to our province that youth really care about biodiversity and that more action and protection needs to be taken” states Christina Vietinghoff, a high school student from Fredericton, New Brunswick . Lia Chiasson, a member of EcoAction in Sackville NB says that “We need to increase awareness to elevate social concern to see a change in New Brunswick's approach to matters pertaining to biodiversity.”

“This Accord on Biodiversity is an opportunity for both youth and adults in New Brunswick to take action to help conserve and promote biodiversity” so says C Vietinghoff. The Youth Accord on Biodiversity aims to promote the positive work being done as well as address many issues of concern for youth. “The Youth Accord will be a means of bridging the gap of the work being done on biodiversity between all generations.” C Vietinghoff

The accord was drafted by two representatives of Eco-Action from Mount Alison University and from the Fredericton High School Environmental Club. This accord comes during the UN International year of biodiversity.

The full text of the accord and more information can be found at [youth.nben.ca](http://youth.nben.ca).

Christina Vietinghoff  
Fredericton, Nouveau-Brunswick  
[cvietinghoff@hotmail.com](mailto:cvietinghoff@hotmail.com)  
(506) 457-0068

Lia Chiasson  
Sackville, NB  
[liac08@hotmail.com](mailto:liac08@hotmail.com)

Personne-ressource :  
Joanna Brown - (506) 855-4144  
[nben@nben.ca](mailto:nben@nben.ca)

# New Brunswick Youth Biodiversity Accord

## **Biodiversity in New Brunswick**

We, the youth of New Brunswick, understand the value and importance of healthy biological diversity in our province to support all living things. The youth of New Brunswick are extremely concerned about current issues threatening biodiversity in our province. We strongly believe that immediate action is necessary. We demand that the government recognize that these issues are happening and that they are currently affecting the people of our province. **ACTION CANNOT BE PUT ON HOLD!**

In light of the current situation, we are making the following recommendations to the New Brunswick government and have included the commitments we are making.

We trust that you will listen to the voice of the youth.

## **Recommendations to the New Brunswick government**

In order to work together on the issues relevant to biodiversity we deem it important that our laws begin to address the issues at hand. We believe complying with these recommendations will be a win-win situation for youth, the New Brunswick government, our economy, the rest of the population and the living systems on which we depend. Effective laws and regulations must be put in place in order to promote the sustainable treatment of biodiversity in the following key sectors.

- Forestry
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Reduce clear cutting
    - Ban the spraying of our public forests
    - Reduce plantations
    - Plant a diversity of native species when reforesting/restoring the Acadian forest
    - Immediately increase the province's biodiversity standard to current science-based recommendations
    - Increase the net amount of forest land in this province maintained with conservation as its priority
    - Publicize the amount of old forest being lost
    - Provide scientific proof that what old forest is being maintained is enough
    - Increase the net amount of mature forest by 40%
  
- Fisheries
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Implement effective and legally binding legislation that will insure biodiversity in the coastal waters

- Endorse the Coastal Protection Act
  - Engage communities in creating integrated marine resource planning between the province and the federal government
  - Improve the communication between federal and provincial bodies responsible for our coasts and fisheries
  - Regulate waste disposal and pesticide use in our coastal waters
  - Develop a new policy that uses the limitations of ecosystems as base for the development of the aquaculture industry
  - Consult neighbouring communities before approving aquaculture facilities
- Agriculture
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Promote and support organic farming methods which show 30% more biodiversity versus conventional farming methods
    - Implement legislation which discourages monocultures
    - Create and carry out an action plan to maintain seed diversity
    - Create and carry out an action plan to protect native and non-native pollinators
    - Encourage and support local farmers and local food
    - Ban the use of genetically modified seed
- Wetlands
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Conserve wetlands for their water purification benefits
    - Conserve wetlands for their importance as wildlife habitats
    - Conserve wetlands for their flood and storm water retention properties
    - Increase the buffer zones in the Wetlands Conservation Policy beyond 30 meters
- Development
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Further promote renewable energy technologies by subsidizing them
    - Factor in the value of maintaining healthy ecological biodiversity when considering development projects
    - Promote the use of environmental impact assessments and increase their effectiveness in actually preventing harmful development
- Public awareness
  - We are calling on the government to
    - Create programs to promote awareness of biodiversity within all sectors
    - Support and collaborate with environmental non-governmental organisations working to raise awareness about biodiversity
    - Incorporate education on loss of biodiversity into the curriculum at all grade levels.
    - As a province, commit to 2020 biodiversity targets set by the Convention on Biological Diversity

## **Commitment from New Brunswick youth and supporters**

We the undersigned commit to using our skills and abilities for the promotion and sustainable use of biodiversity in the province of New Brunswick.

- **Raising awareness about biodiversity.** We recognise the intrinsic value of biodiversity and will continue beyond this accord to raise awareness about it.
- **Concrete actions.** We want and need change. We commit to furthering this accord by organizing events and activities which address the threats to biodiversity.
- **Reporting back and holding the government accountable.** We commit to reporting back to the government on what we have accomplished on an annual basis. We expect the government to also be accountable by keeping us as well as the general public up to date on what is being done to address the threats to biodiversity.

## **We the undersigned youth groups support the *New Brunswick Youth Biodiversity Accord***

Fredericton High School Environmental Club, Fredericton NB

EcoAction, Sackville NB

People for a Better Community, Petitcodiac NB

Le comité environnement de la Polyvalente Roland-Pépin, Campbellton NB

Symbiose, Moncton NB

Comité d'environnement de la polyvalente Thomas-Albert, Edmunston NB

1st Saint Michael's Venturers, Moncton NB

Comité d'environnement de l'École Saint Anne, Fredericton NB

## **We the undersigned groups support the *New Brunswick Youth Biodiversity Accord***

Falls Brook Centre, Knowsville NB

Groupe Littoral et vie, NB

Saint John Citizens coalition For Clean Air, Saint John NB

Campaign for Pesticide Reduction, Quispamsis NB

Le Groupe de développement durable du Pays de Cocagne, Cocagne NB

Conservation Council of New Brunswick  
Canada Parks and Wilderness Society of New Brunswick